

# MONTGOMERY MOVING FORWARD

Mobilizing leaders to work across sectors to solve our biggest problems together

OCTOBER 2014

## call to action

### Fueling our Future with Skilled Workers and Good Jobs

Together, we—industry, education, government, nonprofits, philanthropy—need to step up and own our role in creating a county where every resident looking for a job is employed and on a career path towards self-sufficiency; every employer has a pool of well-trained residents; and new and growing employers choose Montgomery County because of its skilled, ready and willing workforce.

In the face of data pointing to an unmistakable shortage of skilled workers over the next 20 years and too many residents unable to have and hold a good job, MMF is calling for a new accountability for a “jobs culture” for Montgomery County. We urge that the following action steps be initiated over the next year in order to begin to close the gap between good jobs and the supply of skilled employees to fill those jobs that are essential to a functioning and thriving economy.

In the context of overall economic development, MMF’s overarching recommendation is:  
**Montgomery County must have a single, readily-identifiable structure to lead, elevate and coordinate a comprehensive system of workforce development that ensures a pipeline of qualified workers for businesses, leads to residents finding good jobs, and fuels a robust local economy that strengthens community. The workforce development system of the future must be industry-driven, data-informed, skills-oriented, and population-specific.**

In order to achieve defined and measurable outcomes and earn a high-level of public confidence and respect, the structure of the workforce development system of the future and its leadership must be:

- ▶ Authoritative and inspirational;
- ▶ Empowered to oversee mutually reinforcing activities across all sectors;
- ▶ Outcomes-based and held accountable to outcome metrics; and
- ▶ Aligned with and supported by the Workforce Investment Board;
- ▶ Properly resourced.

*Less-educated workers are struggling to maintain a foothold in the region’s economy.*

## Action Steps

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1 Have a single, readily-identifiable structure to lead, elevate and coordinate a comprehensive system of workforce development that ensures a pipeline of qualified workers for businesses, leads to residents finding good jobs, and fuels a robust local economy that strengthens community. The workforce development system of the future must be industry-driven, data-informed, skills-oriented, and population-specific.

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2 Coordinate and integrate the best of current strategic efforts into a single community-wide approach that recognizes and responds to the needs of many different and diverse constituencies and is accountable for success.

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3 Maintain, analyze and widely disseminate current data about industry and cluster trends and job forecasts and related skill requirements as well as data about demographic and population trends.

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4 Document and remove obstacles to success such as affordable and/or accessible dependent care, transportation, second language acquisition, credentialing and training.

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5 Create and maintain accessible quantitative and qualitative information on current training and workforce development programs to meet the needs of employers, job-seekers, students and educators.

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6 Design career and college pathways from middle school to mid-career to provide training and additional support to better equip residents to follow a route to prosperity from education into and through the workforce.

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7 Develop a continuum of work-based learning opportunities, that begins with Montgomery County Public Schools and extends to Montgomery College and the Universities at Shady Grove, for youth and others (i.e. veterans, people with disabilities, foreign born residents, incarcerated residents, and older workers). The purpose would be to strengthen the connection between education and work and to facilitate the development of personal social networks.

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In addition, Montgomery Moving Forward recommends that the workforce development system:

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8 Ensure that public and private investors are in regular dialogue in order to coordinate and support efforts and provide resources to bring successful programs to scale.

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9 Experiment with less traditional, but potentially effective avenues of economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.

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10 Adopt a checklist of principles and measurements to use when evaluating and monitoring current and new workforce development programs such as:

- ▶ *Does this respond to a documented labor market need?*
- ▶ *Does this build on current successful work?*
- ▶ *Does this take into account the requisite work supports?*
- ▶ *Does this take into account the requisite soft skills?*
- ▶ *Is there a plan to maximize employee retention?*
- ▶ *Is there a plan to encourage career advancement?*
- ▶ *Is there a plan to monitor, evaluate and continuously improve or discontinue the program?*

## The Facts

### More jobs than workers

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- ▶ One of the biggest challenges facing employers in Montgomery County is the projected gap between jobs to fill and available workers. According to projections from the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University, between 2012 and 2022, the County will need almost 175,000 new workers.
- ▶ For example, according to a 2010 report from Trust for America on the national nursing shortage, Maryland has an estimated shortage of 7,000 nurses. In Montgomery County, the number of job openings for Registered Nurses is projected to increase from nearly 20,000 in 2010 to more than 25,000 in 2020.

### Education pays...

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- ▶ According to projections from the Center for Regional Analysis, 35% of net new jobs and 28.5% of replacement jobs between 2012 and 2022 will require four or more years of college; 4% will require an associate's degree.
- ▶ Every level of educational attainment steadily increases earning power while drastically reducing the chances of unemployment. The median annual earnings in Maryland is about \$32,000 with a high school degree and about \$57,000 with a bachelor's degree, according to the US Census Bureau.
- ▶ Less-educated workers are struggling to maintain a foothold in the region's economy, according to *Bursting the Bubble*.
  - For workers without a high school diploma, the median wage has fallen 13%.
  - Capital area workers with only a high school diploma have seen a larger drop in median wages (81 cents) than their peers in the rest of the country (51 cents).
  - For workers with some college but not a bachelor's degree, the median wage has fallen 10%.
  - For workers without a bachelor's degree, median wages have dropped 5% since the recession, after accounting for inflation.

### ...but workers lack necessary training and skills

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- ▶ About 43% of Montgomery County residents have some college, an associate's degree or less and 24% have a HS degree, GED or less.
- ▶ About 75% of the 2012 Montgomery County Public Schools graduates enrolled in college within one year of high school, according to the 2014 Maryland Report Card. FARMS students have only a 40% rate of enrollment.
- ▶ 44% of 500 senior executives said that soft skills were the area with the biggest skills gap; 22% said technical skills; 2% said computer skills.

### Too many obstacles to work and advancement

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The inadequate and unaffordable supply of supports such as child care, transportation and second language classes can become insurmountable barriers to participation in the workforce and/or career advancement.

- ▶ For example, though the US Department of Health and Human Services recommends that parents not spend more than 10% of income on child care, the average percentage of income spent on child care in Montgomery County is close to 25%. 47% of parents who could not find child care here cited cost as the reason, according to Maryland Family Network.
- ▶ The cost-burden of commuting in the region is among the highest in the country, greater than the national median, and working poor households spend nearly three times more than other households, in relative terms, according to Brookings.

### As incomes fall, poverty rises

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Poverty has grown at a faster pace in suburbs than in cities over the last few decades, and suburbia is now home to over one third of the nation's poor. In Montgomery County, MD, more than 30,000 additional people were driven into poverty during the period between 2007 and 2011. In the book *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America*, co-author

Alan Berube said, "No other county in the Washington region, including the District of Columbia, experienced increases in poverty of the same magnitude during the late 2000s."

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# The Current Approach

## Strategic efforts

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Following is a snapshot of the many current standalone strategic efforts that touch on workforce development.

- ▶ **Montgomery County, MD Comprehensive Economic Strategy Plan**—County Executive is required to submit this to the County Council for approval by July 1, 2015. The plan will include business development, workforce development and community development.
- ▶ **Montgomery County Department of Economic Development**—Workforce Development Environmental Scan and Blueprint for the Future to be completed by December 31, 2014.
- ▶ **Workforce Investment Board (WIB)**—Existing strategic plan has been revised and is scheduled to be released soon.
- ▶ **Montgomery County Workforce Investment Board, Inc. (a 501c3)**—New entity established to raise private dollars to support workforce development activities.
- ▶ **New Montgomery**—An initiative launched by the County Executive in 2013 to better position the County for greater success with a job creation strategy component.
- ▶ **Montgomery County Council Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO)**—In 2014, as part of its yearly work plan, OLO recently produced a report on Youth and Work in Montgomery County.
- ▶ **Career Pathways Legislation**—Council Member Berliner introduced legislation to establish a career pathways program that speaks to enhancing workforce development in the County.
- ▶ **Ready for Tomorrow: Education & Workforce Summit**—Council Member Navarro is the lead sponsor of this 10/18/2014 summit which has a goal of making recommendations to reduce the achievement gap and prepare students to be the workforce of tomorrow.
- ▶ **Connecting Youth to Opportunity**—A research-based blueprint for improving opportunity for Latino youth in Montgomery County was released in June 2014 by Identity, Inc. and the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region; a comparative study for African American youth is underway and will be released in 2015.

## Workforce education and training programs

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An initial inventory of workforce development programs includes more than 150 community-based programs and dozens of workplace-based programs available to Montgomery County residents. Here are just eight examples:

- ▶ **Montgomery College & MI-BEST** speeds up the rate at which English language learners can earn credentials and move into high-demand jobs. Since its pilot in 2011, this program has served 100+ students in three programs.
- ▶ **Workforce Investment Board's One-Stop Career Centers** serves 14,000 job seekers and 700 employers annually
- ▶ **Universities at Shady Grove** serves more than 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students in 80 programs and offers a cost-effective model: students who follow the pathway from community college to USG save nearly \$8,000 in tuition and fees compared to attending a four-year school, and the county and state save nearly \$14,000 per student.
- ▶ **CollegeTracks and ACES** both help put students on the path to college degrees. Since 2003, CollegeTracks has worked with 2,300 low-income and first-generation college students. In 2013, 99% of the program's graduating seniors were accepted to college or technical school. Currently serving more than 1,000 students, ACES is a new partnership between MCPS, Montgomery College, and Universities at Shady Grove that launched in the 2013-2014 school year, providing supports and interventions to selected students starting in the ninth grade, to put them on the path to earning a bachelor's degree.
- ▶ **Wheaton 2015** Wheaton High School is on the way to becoming the first MCPS high school to be programmatically redesigned to move instruction to project-based learning (PBL). The plans already under way – with full implementation in the 2015-2016 school year – reflect the MCPS vision for 21st-century college and career readiness. PBL offers a closer approximation to work settings and helps students develop skills for success in the workforce. Plans for the school were developed in partnership with parents, business and community leaders.
- ▶ **CVS Caremark** has 23 stores in the County with around 2,000 employees. Workforce development efforts include job shadowing, internships, clinical experience, and on-the-job training for every type of job the company offers. CVS has special employment programs for veterans, youth, mature workers (55+), and individuals with disabilities.
- ▶ **Thomas Edison High School of Technology** offers 18 career and technology programs, ranging from automotive repair, to principles of architecture and CAD technology, to hospitality and tourism. Students at all MCPS comprehensive high schools may apply for enrollment in Edison programs, which are geared toward career readiness. For instance, students can follow a construction pathway that includes carpentry, construction electricity, HVAC, masonry and plumbing. In addition to offering professional certifications and licenses, many of the programs allow students to earn college credit.

► **Rx for Employability** was conceived of by Montgomery Moving Forward and Montgomery Business Development Corporation to create a sustainable and replicable career pathways workforce development demonstration project in the health and wellness field including, but not limited to

instrument sterilization technicians, pharmacy technicians, medical coders 10, and possibly certified nursing assistants. Over two years, Rx for Employability aims to help approximately 210 individuals onto a career pathway.

## Does it add up?

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Like the many communities across the country that are rethinking their approaches to workforce development and jobs creation, “jobs” is being discussed in Montgomery County in many important and overlapping circles, focusing on vision and strategy as well as programming. The multiple strategic efforts and front line programs reflect the wide variety of pathways and

cross-sector collaborations that must be tied together to create a readily accessible and fully coordinated system of talent and skills cultivation that leads to: Residents finding good jobs. Businesses finding qualified workers. A robust local economy that strengthens the community.

*The multiple strategic efforts and front line programs must be tied together to create a readily accessible and fully coordinated system that leads to: **Residents finding good jobs. Businesses finding qualified workers. A robust local economy that strengthens the community.***

## Accountability

Recognizing the urgent need to make progress as well as the challenge of coordinating a lot of moving parts in order to effect positive and lasting change, MMF is calling for a 100-Day Momentum Check-in and will release a community report

card in six and twelve months on progress towards creating a workforce development system of the future for Montgomery County. The report card will be based on the Call to Action and Action Steps articulated above.

## Background

Montgomery Moving Forward was created in June 2013 following the release of *Beyond Charity: Nonprofit Business in Montgomery County*—a report describing the economic impact of the County’s nonprofits—and simultaneous conversations about the need to approach our community’s problems differently.

Montgomery Moving Forward is practicing a new way of working together to marshal community resources to solve community problems. We are bringing together leaders from all of our communities and professions—education and academia, business, nonprofits, philanthropy, government, neighborhoods—to find common ground, agree on a common vision for change, embrace specific actionable plans and engage in continuous, open communication.

Using the *Collective Impact* model, the MMF Leadership Group is co-chaired by a member of the Montgomery County School Board, a nonprofit executive, a medium-sized business owner and a former elected official turned business consultant. The MMF working groups include a much larger circle of stakeholders.

To begin, MMF is focusing on good jobs—with opportunities for advancement and with pay and benefits which allow an individual or family to cover basic needs and save without government or private assistance—so that more residents achieve self-sufficiency, more local businesses find qualified workers, more communities contribute to and share in countywide prosperity and the County can establish lasting pathways to success for our changing community.

# Montgomery Moving Forward Leadership Group

**Uma Ahluwalia**

Director, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services

**Marilyn Balcombe**

CEO, Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce

**Steve Bauman**

Vice President, Global Learning, Marriott International

**Kevin Beverly - (Co-Chair)**

Executive Vice President, Social & Scientific Systems, Inc.

**Shirley Brandman - (Co-Chair)**

Member, Montgomery County Board of Education

**Bob Buchanan**

Partner, Buchanan Partners

**Stew Edelstein**

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**Ronnie Galvin**

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**David Gamse**

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**C. Marie Henderson**

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**Linda McMillan**

Legislative Analyst, Montgomery County Council

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**Arlene Pietranton**

Chief Executive Officer, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

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**Hope Gleicher**

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As of October 1, 2014, the following have endorsed Montgomery Moving Forward's overarching recommendation:

\* indicates member of MMF Leadership Group

\*\* indicates co-chair of MMF Leadership Group

**Montgomery Moving Forward believes there should be a consolidated effort to unify all the workforce development efforts in the county, with a single, readily-identifiable structure to lead the way.**

**Uma Ahluwalia\***

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Director, Maryland Multicultural Youth Center/Latin America Youth Center

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**Lisa Reeves**

President & CEO, Easter Seals Serving DC | MD | VA

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**Marla Weston**

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**Cliff White\***

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